IPRO 326 Code of Ethics

We will examine the ethics of our problem/solution along with the ethical dynamics of our own team. Ethical considerations are important because people often become so focused on a solution or getting a task done that they forget to look at the big picture.

The main ethical dilemmas that come into play when considering our solution is where do we draw the lines for what is best for the common person versus the community. If we subscribe to the belief of John Stuart Mill's Utilitarianism, we could determine what is best for all parties involved. Using a system of hedonic calculus, putting arbitrary numbers on something that cannot necessarily be measured (happiness, natural environment, etc…), we can assign values to the different phenomena inherit to our problem. It would be convenient to continue to allow all Americans the opportunity to purchase inexpensive energy even though it may be environmentally damaging. It is much harder to force people to change, which can lead to economic suffering, for an ideal that does not necessarily have short term results. Where is the line between corporate and personal responsibility? A real ethical dilemma this team will encounter will be how to make a populace become responsible while still ensuring that the utility is acting in a responsible fashion.

Ethical considerations within the team are thankfully less daunting. Whenever working in groups a problem of some members committing more to the team than others is an issue. Our team has worked to solve this by splitting the problem into several manageable sub-sections. Sub-team leaders communicating back to the group leader helps to ensure all personnel remain on task. Another issue within the team is the problem of direct and indirect communication: sometimes group members can be left in the dark when much of the communication must be electronic due to the physical separation of the majority of the commuter students. The team has worked on this by ensuring that communication flows neatly up and down from the lowest possible level to the highest.